AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 15, replace the paragraph, beginning on line 20, bridging pages 15 and 16, with the following amended paragraph:

--Next, the length of the coastline is measured using a curvimeter, a image processing unit, and the like. Since the total extension of the coastline will increase in accordance with the width dependency of the welded portion, it is necessary to normalize the welded part by dividing the welded portion at a fixed interval to express the complexity of the coastline. The procedure for normalization is explained referring to Figure 5. In the present invention, a line is drawn by connecting the terminals (outermost-layer terminals) of the layer (A) on the opposite side of the layer (C). This line is referred to as the terminal line X. A line starting from the terminal line and crossing the terminal line X at a right angle is drawn toward the layer (C). This line is referred to as a right-angled line Y. Next, a line connecting the points crossing the right-angled line at a distance equivalent to the thickness of the sheet-like material toward the layer (C) side from the terminal line is drawn. This line is referred to as a base line Z. Here, the thickness of the sheet-like material indicates the thickness of the non-welded portion of the sheet-like material. The base line [[X]] Z is divided at intervals of 0.4 mm. A partition number is given to each section. Each section is defined as a zone parted by two right-angled lines Y and one terminal line X, with the

layer (C) side opened. The layer (C) side is left open because the coastline may come to the terminal line side beyond the base line or may not reach the base line. After defining the sections according to the above procedure, the total extension of the coastline of each section is measured. The maximum value is regarded as L_{BC}. Sections on the layer E side are defined in the same manner and the total extension of the coastline of each section is measured. The maximum value is regarded as L_{DC}.--